

## APPENDIX B. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT.

Public involvement is a key component of community strategic planning processes. It offers citizens the chance to voice their ideas, interests, and opinions. Washington's Growth Management Act addresses the need for public participation in local comprehensive planning activities (RCW 36.70a 140). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) also requires public input during the development of hazard mitigation plans.

The approach used to develop the Benton County Hazard Mitigation Plan was designed to maximize opportunities for broad public involvement in the Plan's formulation in order to provide an integrated cross-section of stakeholder input throughout the planning process. To accomplish this goal, an aggressive public involvement program was developed at the onset of the planning process.

The public involvement program consisted of five main components:

- (1) Identifying a project **Steering Committee** comprised of representatives from the County and the cities within Benton County.
- (2) Forming a **Planning Committee** made up of people who are knowledgeable about the County and the various communities within it.
- (3) Holding a series of **public meetings and workshops** with Benton County citizens and agency stakeholders to identify common, as well as specific concerns, and to discuss priorities and potential mitigation actions.
- (4) Conducting **stakeholder interviews** to garner the specialized knowledge of individuals working with populations or areas at risk from the three natural hazards – flood, wildfires and windstorms – evaluated as part of this stage of Benton County's natural hazard mitigation planning process.
- (5) **Community events** to increase the exposure of the hazard mitigation planning process to the general public and solicit input and feedback.

It is also worthy to note that the interview process resulted in the identification of some additional natural and technological hazard concerns and recommended mitigation actions besides flooding, windstorms and wildfires. This information will be incorporated into the appropriate parts of this and future updates of the BCHMP.

However, regardless of this focus on early and ongoing public involvement, much of Benton County is in an uncommon situation due to its proximity to the Hanford Nuclear Site, Columbia Generating Station (CGS), and the Umatilla Chemical Depot (UMCD). For many years now these facilities have occupied the minds and discretionary time of many members of the public, including hundreds of hours of public participation activities related to these facilities to discuss and find solutions for safety concerns. Every day people in Benton County live with the knowledge that an incident at either facility could require emergency response. By comparison, public notices and invitations to meetings to discuss hazard mitigation planning activities brought little interest or response from community members. This resulted in our refocusing our public workshop and meetings portion of the public involvement program on public information, education and outreach, while simultaneously inviting public comment and interactions between

the public and members of the project team. This approach provided for increasing the exposure of the Benton County hazard mitigation planning process, while simultaneously continuing to ask for information and feedback from area residents throughout the development of the Plan. It also proved to be our most successful public involvement tool as it resulted in raising the awareness of citizens throughout the County about the purpose and value of hazard mitigation planning, and that the County was undertaking such an effort.

The paragraphs that follow serve as an overview of the public involvement process that was used during the development of the Benton County Hazard Mitigation Plan. Given the relatively limited time frame that was allotted for developing the Plan in comparison to the community's long history with Hanford, CGS, and UMCD, one of the mitigation action items included in the Plan is to continue to educate the County's citizens about the County's priority and other natural and technological hazards. As awareness continues to increase, so will interest and more people will likely choose to become involved in future updates of the BCHMP.

### ***B.1 Steering Committee***

The Benton County Hazard Mitigation Plan (BCHMP) was prepared under the direction of the Executive Board of Benton County Emergency Services (BCES). The Executive Board served as the BCHMP Steering Committee, and provided overall direction for the BCHMP. At the time the BCHMP was initiated, the Executive Board (Steering Committee) was composed of:

Kim Baldwin, Benton City Councilor  
Max Benitz, Benton County Commissioner  
Ken Carter, Manager, City of Prosser  
John Darrington, Manager, City of Richland  
Bob Hammond, Manager, City of Kennewick  
Donna Noski, City of West Richland Councilor

The Steering Committee ensured the participation of Benton County and the municipalities within the County in the hazard mitigation planning process and the development of the Benton County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

### ***B.2 Planning Committee***

The Steering Committee solicited interested parties from the municipalities, stakeholders, and the general public to become involved in the planning process. The Steering Committee then appointed a Planning Committee to initiate and oversee formulation and maintenance of the BCHMP, to establish city-specific hazard mitigation action items and to coordinate the hazard mitigation action items between the involved municipalities. The BCHMP Planning Committee is composed of:

Russ Amato, Williams Pipeline Company  
Linda Boomer, Port of Kennewick  
Jack Clark, Kennewick Public Works  
Teresa Esparza, Cascade Natural Gas Company  
Bob Gear, Chief, Benton County Fire District No. 1  
Colin Hastings, Tri-Cities Home Builders Association  
Stephen Lockhaven, Framatome ANP  
Terry Marden, Benton County Planning Director

Tom Probasco, Framatome ANP  
Tony Schouviller, Benton County Public Works  
Mike Smith, Kennewick Administrative Service  
Ken Taylor, Kennewick Police Department  
Mark Yaden, Kennewick Fire Department

Invitations to participate on the Planning Committee were extended to representatives from the cities of Benton City, West Richland, Richland and Prosser. These cities opted not to participate on the Planning Committee at this time; however, all of the municipalities actively supported the development of the BCHMP.

All of the municipalities of Benton County supported the initiation, development and implementation of the BCHMP by:

- Writing letters in support of obtaining a hazard mitigation planning grant for Benton County and committing matching funds.
- Providing representation on the Steering Committee.
- Providing representation and/or assistance to the Planning Committee.
- Making staff and resources available for hazard characterization.
- Providing technical assistance throughout the planning process.
- Developing mitigation action items to address priority hazards.
- Assigning priorities to their mitigation action items.
- Assisting in the public involvement process including participating in interviews and providing staff support for public meetings.
- Reviewing drafts of the BCHMP and providing suggested revisions.
- Adopting the BCHMP and recommending it be forwarded to the Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division and Federal Emergency Management Agency for approval.

In addition to those people listed above, people who attended some of the early organization meetings were Nancy Aldrich, City of Richland; Doug Merritt, Prosser Fire; Ross Dunfee, Benton County Public Works; Christine Rivas, Cascade Natural Gas; Ron Duncan, Benton County Fire District No. 2; Bill Cherwien, Benton County Fire District No. 4; and Rick Garza, Benton County Emergency Services.

### **Initial Development of the BCHMP**

Three meetings were held during the initial development of the Benton County Hazard Mitigation Plan (December 4, 2002, April 2, 2003, May 8, 2003). These meetings served to initiate the planning process, identify natural and man-made hazards of concern, and select three hazards – flood, wildfire, and windstorms – as being of particular concern to Benton County.

#### **Meeting 1 – December 4, 2003 – Organizing Meeting**

Attendees were provided with background information about hazard mitigation planning and why it's important for the County to develop a Hazard Mitigation Plan. They were also briefed on the grant application BCES had submitted to FEMA and the commitments that each of the municipalities had made in relation to the grant. Other topics discussed during the meeting included: who needs to be involved in developing the plan and how to get word out to these people, and the importance of identifying which disasters to include in the plan and to determine what steps can be taken to prevent losses.

**Meeting 2 – April 2, 2003 – Planning Committee Meeting**

Members of the Planning Committee were provided with a brief overview of the mitigation planning process. The majority of this meeting was spent reviewing the potential natural and technological hazards in Benton County and its local jurisdictions. A review of some of the past natural hazard events occurred and an extensive list of potential natural and technological hazards was developed. This included wildfires, winds, earthquakes, severe storms, drought, floods, hazardous material spills, landslides, urban fires, and volcanic eruptions. General discussion about the potential occurrence and impact of each of these hazards within Benton County resulted in there being consensus that wildfires and windstorms are the two most likely events to affect the area. Attendees also participated in an exercise that used the Hazard Identification and Risk Elimination template from the *Mitigation 20/20*™ provided by Washington Emergency Management, and a discussion took place about making sure the public is made aware of and invited to participate in the mitigation planning process. It was decided a news release would be issued prior to the end of the month and a public meeting would be scheduled for May.

**Meeting 3 – May 8, 2003 - Planning Committee Meeting**

Committee members reviewed the Hazard Identification and Risk Elimination sheets that had been completed, and each hazard was reviewed and discussed during this meeting. The outcome was the identification of three natural hazards that the Committee felt posed the greatest threat to the County – wildfire, flooding and high winds. A decision was made for the committee to focus its work on developing a mitigation plan that specifically addresses these three hazards. Also discussed during this meeting was 1) the identification of “critical” facilities within the county and its jurisdictions, 2) hiring a consulting firm to oversee the completion of the mitigation plan, and 3) notification that Benton County will be co-hosting a public meeting about local hazard mitigation planning efforts with the City of Richland. Both print and broadcast publicity were to be used to get word out about the meeting.

**Review and Approval of the Draft BCHMP**

In addition to helping to frame the Plan’s focus, the Planning Committee reviewed and refined the Draft Benton County Hazard Mitigation Plan. A Draft Plan was submitted to the Planning Committee (and made available to the public) for review. Comments from the Planning Committee and other interested parties were pooled by BCES, and revisions made to the Plan documentation by HDR. A subsequent Final Draft Plan was produced and distributed to the Planning Committee for final review.

**Meeting 4 – January 13, 2004 - Planning Committee and Plan Reviewers’ Meeting**

A meeting was held following the Planning Committee’s review of the Final Draft Plan. The meeting combined both the Planning Committee as well as representatives from participating municipalities. During this meeting, participants were briefed about the range of comments that had been received during the review period and the numerous ways in which information about the Plan’s review was disseminated to members of the public. The Planning Committee and municipal representatives suggested additional refinements to the Plan and recommended it be forwarded to the local municipalities and Benton County Commissioners for approval.

### ***B.3 Public Meetings/Workshops***

#### **a) Stakeholders Meeting**

Important to the development of the Benton County Hazard Mitigation Plan were discussions with area stakeholders regarding any specific knowledge they have related to flooding, windstorms and wildfires; the ability of their organizations to provide basic services should a hazardous event occur; and potential mitigation activities. While this meeting was initially planned for the City of Richland's natural hazards mitigation planning process and was critical to the development of that plan, it is also applicable for the Benton County HMP as much of the information provided by the participating stakeholders was applicable to other areas of the County as well.

More than 40 area service providers were invited to a Stakeholders Meeting the morning of May 20<sup>th</sup> where they received an in-depth briefing about the hazard mitigation planning processes being undertaken in Benton County, had their questions answered, discussed their concerns and provided the HDR project team with information regarding a series of pre-prepared questions.

Nineteen stakeholders attended the meeting representing 13 agencies. Two were members of the City of Richland's NHMP Steering Committee. Each of the invitees received a personal phone call more than two weeks prior to the meeting inviting them to attend. The majority of stakeholders were individuals who had not previously been involved in the County's hazard mitigation planning activities.

Based on the rich content of the meeting, follow-up conversations occurred with many of the attendees. Where appropriate, stakeholders were added to the project team's list of people to interview.

#### **Meeting Attendees**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Organization</u></b>
Brad Anderson	Badger Mountain Irrigation District
Gary Beeman	Washington Department of Transportation, Yakima
Bryan Coyne	Benton Public Utility District
Harlan Scherer	Benton Public Utility District
Len Pavelka	Benton-Franklin Council of Governments
Candace Andrews	City of Richland
Steven Kessis	Cascade Natural Gas
Teresa Esparaza	Cascade Natural Gas
Tana Bader Inglima	Tri-Cities Visitors and Convention Bureau
Nancy Aldrich	City of Richland
Don Glaser	Richland Schools
Bob Bold	Richland School District
Randy Rice	Charter Communications
Ron Root	Charter Communications
Shawn McVay	Verizon Northwest
Ken Cunningham	Verizon Northwest
Debra Ticknor	American Red Cross
Jean Schalasky	Kadlec Medical Center

Steve Sautter

Benton County Emergency Services

Those attending the meeting were separated into two groups and asked the following questions:

1. Which of these hazards concern you?
2. What has been your experience with these hazards?
3. How is your organization prepared to respond to these hazards should they occur?
4. Do you have any hazard mitigation plans in place?

Following are the highlights from the discussion that ensued, which are applicable to the Benton County HMP:

- The School District's representatives identified the following groups as critical contacts during a hazard event:
  - Travel, Sports Groups
  - Parents
  - State and Local Health Departments
  - Local Fire District
  - Bonneville Power Administration
  - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
  - Benton County Emergency Management
  - Red Cross
  - 911
  - All Hospitals in County
  - Washington State Department of Transportation
- The public water system (where available) was identified as a critical element that must be maintained if a hazard were to occur. There are several ongoing efforts in the municipalities that would support protection of this system such as the wellhead protection program and a vulnerability assessment that is underway now in the City of Richland (West Richland is planning a similar effort, and the City of Kennewick is undergoing a vulnerability assessment of its water system).
- During a hazard event the group pointed out that the function of the hospitals (including efforts to airlift victims, operate ambulances, or transport casualties using buses) would be critical. The PUD has an emergency call management program that will be used to respond to problems caused by the occurrence of a hazard. It was pointed out that many of the agencies and utilities in the municipalities depend on an "obsolete phone system."

- The group identified the following issues associated with hazards (*Note: the issues are generally presented as identified by the group; however, some issues have received minor edits for clarity*):
- Windstorms as having a potentially severe impact on power lines in the area.
  - Wildfires causing problems for outlying facilities such as power substations, pump stations, or remote buildings providing other utility services if the fire directly impacted them.
  - Floods on the Yakima River adversely affecting utilities located in low-lying areas.
  - Severe winter weather resulting in the development of ice dams on the Yakima River, in turn causing localized flooding.
  - Floods resulting in erosion on natural gas lines near south Richland.
  - The Department of Transportation works closely with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to control erosion along the rivers and prevent damage to roads due to erosion during a flood hazard.
  - Severe winter storms causing significant ice loading on poles, power lines, and trees. If the ice gets heavy enough it could cause the power lines to fail either directly or from tree limbs falling on them.
  - A loss of power will have no effect on Cascade Natural Gas.
  - Electricity supplies above and below ground can be affected by hazards.
  - Verizon Phone lines are located both above and below ground, and have some electric backup but cannot sustain long periods of power interruption.
  - Cable TV has some backup ability but is also limited.
  - Verizon has a Hazard Mitigation Plan on-call supervisor who implements their plan through a call list to on-call crews to respond to the impacts of a hazard.
  - The level or degree of severity associated with a hazard is difficult to define but can usually be tied to the budget costs for responding to damage caused by the hazard.
  - Spills/leaks of hazardous materials and chemicals caused by natural hazards should be included in the plan.
  - Windstorms adversely affect roads (e.g., shutdown) by causing either smoke or dust.
  - Stormwater (flooding) is a concern where damage to property occurs.
  - Communication between entities is critical to limiting the impacts from any given hazard.
  - It is important to provide training and run through “Exercises” to ensure plan works.
  - Wildfire adversely affects power junctions and poles. If they fail there is a limited ability to reroute power and some communities may end up without power for an extended period of time.
  - Isolated communities such as Horn Rapids experience ingress/egress difficulties during many hazards (wind and fire particularly).
  - Lightning strikes cause problems in many areas, as some facilities do not have sufficient grounding to properly handle it. Many things can be done, but essentially a program needs to be implemented for gas and electrical facilities that identifies problem areas, add grounding to keep up with current requirements, and keep the systems in good repair.
  - School Districts maintain procedures for emergencies.
  - The Red Cross evaluates sites for use during evacuations.
  - Communications are a major issue; communities can lose telephone lines during most significant hazard events and cellular phone systems may become overloaded.
  - DOT has own communication system that can be used to support other agencies if necessary.

- Wildfire prevention is addressed by municipal regulations for keeping brush down; however enforcement is difficult.
- There are interactions between natural and manmade hazards. For instance if a pipe breaks it may interact with an unstable slope to result in a significant debris flow.
- There are other “natural” hazards of potential importance to the community, such as biological hazards like West Nile virus and SARS.
- Benton PUD noted that the most severe hazards they have experienced are wind and fires.
- Several communication facilities on Rattlesnake Mountain experienced the impacts of recent wildfires.
- Earthquakes and landslides could adversely affect many of the irrigation canals around the area such as Badger Mountain Irrigation District (BMID), causing breaks and localized flood damage.
- The School District identified earthquakes and fire as significant concerns based on the age of many of their buildings.
- Hospitals will have evacuation issues for some hazards, also difficulties in staff reaching the hospital. The standard operating procedure is for on duty staff on duty to remain on duty until replacements arrive.
- One member of the group pointed out that there can be many longer term impacts of a hazard that affect things such as tourism. In the case of a fire, earthquake, or flood the media will likely slant the news to be more traumatic than it actually is. On the other hand the hotel business flourished during the last significant hazard by making rooms available to emergency workers.
- Communication is key to the hazard response – one example is the PUD mutual aid coordination plan.
- Floods could have transportation impacts and cause significant problems along evacuation routes. Planning to identify and improve both the primary and secondary routes would be very good.

**b) General Public Workshop**

Efforts to involve the community in the development of a hazard mitigation plan are critical to both the credibility and the effectiveness of the plan. Community involvement leads to a more complete identification of hazards, development of reasonable mitigation alternatives, and the identification of issues that must be addressed to obtain the public’s support of the plan.

A general community-wide workshop was held at the Richland City Shops to provide an opportunity for Benton County’s citizens to learn about the Benton County hazard mitigation planning process and to gain community members’ input. Planners sought public input on the primary hazards (flooding, windstorms and wildfires) being addressed in the BCHMP and other natural and technological hazards that will be included in future updates of the Plan, as well as to receive public input regarding potential mitigation activities. The workshop was advertised through several means, including:

- Public announcements were sent to the newspaper, local radio stations, and television.
- Information was placed on reader boards.
- Print ads were placed in the newspaper.



- Notices were sent to civic organizations, government agencies, and other interested groups. In addition, several people received personal invitations.

A series of handouts were also prepared for the meeting so that citizens would have information to take home that they could review following the meeting. Comment sheets that asked the following questions were also prepared to gather information from the public:

1. What hazards are you most concerned about (please circle all that apply)?  
Floods, Landslides, Volcanic eruptions, Earthquakes, Windstorms, Severe winter storms, Wildfires
2. Why do these hazards concern you (please respond for each hazard you have circled)?
3. What information do you have about each of these hazards that could help us to understand them better?

An Open House began the meeting with stations set up for Floods, Landslides, Earthquakes, Volcanoes, Wind, Severe Winter Storms, Wildfire, as well as Technological hazards. Each station was tended by BCES staff members and members of the HDR Team who could answer questions about that particular hazard.

Following the Open House, it was intended to gather everyone together and introduce the hazard mitigation planning process, the goals of the plan, major milestones, potential mitigation actions and illicit feedback. The Richland and Benton County HMP planning processes, that were occurring simultaneously, would be explained.

Participants would next be asked to go to a station of their choice and to work their way around the room to each station of interest. At each station were two questions:

- 1) What do you know about this hazard?
- 2) What are your concerns about this hazard?

Participants could write their responses on flip charts provided under each question or could utilize the assistance of the staff members who were tending the station. Throughout this process dialogue would occur between staff members and the participants helping to deepen people's understanding and interest in the hazard mitigation planning process.

Everyone would then be brought back together for general questions, to talk about next steps and to discuss opportunities for members of the public to further participate in the hazard mitigation planning process.

Steering Committee members from both Benton County and the City of Richland attended the meeting, as did members of the press and three citizens. As there were not enough members of the public present to conduct our intended program, both the press and the public were provided with the opportunity to receive a tutored walk through the planning process and to ask questions as they arose.

Following this meeting, a special meeting was held with the Benton County Emergency Services and City of Richland Public Information officers to revisit the public involvement strategy that was initially proposed for the BCHMP. A recommendation was made to revise the public

involvement strategy. The decision was to focus our efforts on public information, education, outreach, and, where appropriate, focus on special interest groups, while simultaneously continuing to ask the general public for information and feedback on the BCHMP.

Another opportunity for broader public involvement was also provided during the Benton County Commissioners' review of the BCHMP and the approval processes conducted in the cities of Benton City, Kennewick, Prosser, Richland, and West Richland. Approval of the BCHMP by the municipalities was achieved through their normal governing procedures, which include clearly defined avenues for public involvement.

**c) Richland Forum on Public Safety**

On August 13, 2003 a Forum on Public Safety was televised by Richland City View cable channel 13, moderated by Michael Charbonneau, Communications Coordinator. M. Charbonneau asked questions of the panelists on various topics of public safety, including traffic safety, homeland security, methamphetamine production, police programs, fire department coverage and staffing needs, and related issues. Questions were solicited from the live audience, by telephone, and by email.

While this activity was sponsored by the City of Richland, it was televised making the information available to a wide array of Benton County citizens. As some of the information provided was directly applicable to Benton County's HMP, reference to this event has been included here.

Chief Grant Baynes, Richland's Acting Fire & Emergency Services Director, introduced the Benton County and City of Richland natural hazard mitigation planning processes. Key points in his description of the plans and their status include that the:

- Plans focus on mitigating natural hazards, trying to get ahead of the disaster and minimize the effects.
- Plans are necessary for future FEMA grants to support mitigation efforts.
- Public input was solicited at a public meeting; and upcoming venues will continue to solicit input from the community.
- The HMP will go before the Council for approval, giving the public another opportunity to comment.

**d) Meeting of the Richland NHMP Steering Committee**

Once it was realized that both Benton County and the City of Richland had received hazard mitigation planning grants, it became evident that the two mitigation planning processes required careful coordination. One such effort was reciprocal attendance of the two project managers at the Benton County Planning Committee and Richland Steering Committee meetings.

The selected information that is being provided from the summary of the April 16<sup>th</sup> Richland NHMP Steering Committee meeting provides information that is relevant to the development of the Benton County HMP. Each Steering Committee member was chosen based upon his or her understanding of how the community is structured and how residents, businesses, and the environment may be affected by natural hazard events.

HDR provided the Steering Committee with handouts that included a meeting agenda, FEMA guidance, information from the Washington State Emergency Management Division, existing mitigation plans, and a preliminary outline for the hazard mitigation plan. The Committee

discussed known hazards, potential sources of supporting data, the proposed outline, and plans for public involvement. Relevant highlights from that discussion follow:

- The plan will evaluate the effects of multi-hazards such as wildfires in combination with wind and lightening.
- It is important to remember that the HMP is focused on unlikely events that, if they were to occur, could cause extensive damage
- Many (if not all) of the entities around the table have hazard response plans in place now. These plans address both natural and man-made hazards, but are a primary source of information that will support the risk assessment work for this HMP.
- The electrical system will likely be affected most directly by wind and/or flooding. There are locations where transformers are in the floodplain and at risk of being inundated.
- Flooding will adversely affect homes, streets, and electrical systems. The amount of impact on water or sewage treatment is anticipated to be minimal.
- Wind will be one of the primary hazards considered during the development of this HMP. The area experiences many different high wind scenarios from downslope windstorms due to localized swirling winds. Major events resulting in significant damage and injuries have occurred within the last five years. The City has several programs in place that address the impacts of winds such as tree trimming programs and requirements for dust control at construction sites. The primary source for wind data is at the weather center in Pendleton.
- Fire (primarily wildfires) will likely be one of the other crucial hazards considered within this HMP. The area of greatest risk lies on the south edge of the City. The City is interested in pursuing establishment of greenways as firebreaks and defensible spaces. Over the long-term addition of personnel to enforce code requirements for clean up of debris or establishing green space around houses would seem to be a reasonable step. There are a number of public education tools that can be used to try to reduce the risk of damage from fire.
- The HDR team will be looking for any information that could identify a natural hazard in terms of: Where it occurred? When it occurred? And how much damage?

Sandra Davis (ECO Resource Group) worked with Candace Andrews (City of Richland), and Steve Sautter (BCES) to coordinate efforts between the City and the County and to begin the process of providing information to the public.

### ***B.4 Stakeholder Interviews***

Stakeholders interviewed for the BCHMP represented members of agencies and organizations throughout the County who have specialized knowledge of issues pertaining to the three primary hazards – windstorms, flooding and wildfires – being evaluated in this initial phase of the hazard mitigation plan. Additional natural and technological hazards will be evaluated in future updates to the Plan. The interviews provided another opportunity for pertinent information to be collected

from Planning Committee members, key staff and elected officials from jurisdictions within the County, and other stakeholders.

The information gained during these interviews has been incorporated into various parts of the BCHMP, particularly those parts associated with each of the jurisdictions, including Benton County, Benton City, Kennewick, Prosser, Richland and West Richland.

The interviewees provided insights about flooding, wildfires and windstorms that would qualify as hazardous events in Benton County. They spoke to what factors have made a given hazard particularly damaging, critical facilities, mutual aid agreements, actions/preparation currently being undertaken to reduce risk or vulnerability from natural hazards, and what future actions could help to mitigate the impacts of future hazardous events.

The interview process consisted of HDR constructing a list of individuals to interview, which was then reviewed by BCES to ensure the list complies with the goals and needs of the County. Once approved, the interview team contacted the interviewees to schedule a time to meet. Additional agency representatives asked to participate in the interview process. For the most part, the interviews were then conducted at the interviewees' place of business. Notes were taken during each of the interviews by the member of the HDR team conducting the interview. Subsequently, these notes were compiled into a summary of the information garnered from the interview process.

Each interview summary identifies the name of the person(s) participating in the interview, the date and place of the interview (if available), a summary of the interviewees' concerns about the primary hazards, critical facilities and potential mitigation action items.

### **Benton City**

Lynn Johnson, Mayor; Lorna Deckert, Councilmember - September 24, 2003; Red Lion Inn, Kennewick

#### **Existing Agreements:**

Mutual aid agreements between City fire and police.

#### **Key Concerns:**

Critical locations are the City Hall, fire station, the Kiona-Benton Schools, Benton City Clinic and the community center within Benton City. There are no alternate locations nearby.

Flooding along low areas of Yakima River affecting low-density housing (agriculture/suburban zoning) south of the railroad tracks.

Wildfire danger is high on County property adjacent to Benton City; Benton County does not enforce debris cleanup for the adjacent county property.

Windstorms and trees impact residential roofs and downed trees. Trees are on City property and utility company and other right-of-way areas, many of which are not "desirable" street trees in that they are subject to disease, harbor insects, and break apart in winds. Vulnerability of developments to damage is low to moderate.

*Action Items:*

- (1) Levees along the river would protect Benton City, but would create downstream impacts so they probably wouldn't be built.
- (2) Some method of breaking up the ice jams.
- (3) FEMA should take a more active role in mitigating future flood hazards by 1) updating the local flood maps (they cited the areas flooded in 1996 [widely described as a 100-year flood] did not match the areas shown in Benton City as within the 100-year floodplain, some were up to two blocks away), and 2) providing clear guidance on what can and cannot be built and where, rather than leaving the decision to local governments without the proper resources.
- (4) Would like to see Benton County implement or enforce similar codes requiring brush and weed removal around buildings (i.e. firebreaks).
- (5) Continue to see the power companies replace overhead power lines with underground lines.
- (6) Work through the Mid-Columbia Community Forestry Council or others to get grants to replace existing street trees with better species.

**City Of Prosser**

Ken Carter, City Administrator; L.J. DaCorsi, Public Works Director; Doug Merritt, Fire Chief – September 18, 2003.

*Existing Agreements:*

Prosser has mutual aid agreements in place via BCES for hazard response. Also, Prosser is a designated shelter point (the Housel Middle School) for evacuees from Paterson and Plymouth in the event of a chemical release from the Umatilla Chemical Depot, and Benton City in the event of a flood.

State grants have supported development of a Tree Management Program to inventory trees and identify immediate hazards.

*Key Concerns:*

Critical facilities include:

- The Housel Middle School – both public shelter and incident command post
- City offices and adjoining Police Station
- Prosser Memorial Hospital
- Potable water treatment plant
- Wastewater treatment plant
- Fire Stations (one in town and one five miles east)

There are no readily available alternate facilities within Prosser.

Flooding concerns include vulnerability of the wastewater lines crossing the river; flooding of the area around the drying beds, including the pump house at the WWTP, during the 100-year event; and approximately two dozen homes along the river to the

west (unincorporated Benton County) that are subject to frequent flooding with often high levels of damage.

Wildfire is a problem for Fire District No. 3 in areas outside the City boundaries, including largely irrigated agricultural lands with low-density housing (as far as Snipes Road), then dryland farms and/or range, and in increasing low-density (one unit per 2.5 acres) housing encroaching into the hills west of the City. The Fire District can access the houses, but does not have the capability to access the rangeland and canyons/hills around the houses. Development in these areas is controlled by Benton County. Another concern as potential sources of wildland fires are unprotected areas that have not joined a fire district.

Windstorms have caused damage to roofs and trees, and toppled airplanes at the Prosser airport. Primary concerns are for old trees and high power lines. Failure of the single main power transmission line supplying the City would cut off power to the City for however long it took to repair the line. Also, there is insufficient emergency power capability to fully maintain water supply and treatment, including waste treatment.

**Action Items:**

- (1) Develop a multi-hazard Emergency Operations Plan for the City of Prosser.
- (2) Obtain additional equipment to allow the Fire District to access and combat wildland fires in remote areas and rugged terrain. Such equipment could include all-terrain vehicles equipped for firefighting and bulldozers to construct fire lines (plus the capability to move the bulldozer to the fire).
- (3) Work with the County to prevent or restrict the development of single-family homes on small (e.g., 2.5 acre) lots in the fringe areas subject to wildfire.
- (4) Address high vulnerability of wastewater lines by (1) re-directing wastewater flow from the City north of the river directly to the WWTP, eliminating the need for the flow crossing the river twice; and (2) re-engineer the lines connecting the south side of the City with the plant to provide adequate flood protection, perhaps by raising them above the river (using nearby road bridges).
- (5) Expansion of the Tree Management Program to provide education to residents.
- (6) Fully develop the Tree Management Program to allow for continual maintenance of city-owned trees, including an evaluation of potential hazards and immediate response to identified hazards.
- (7) Expand the Tree Management Program to include a public education and/or assistance component, providing residents with information on tree management, and possibly some form of assistance to preserve and maintain their trees in a way that mitigates against hazard damage.
- (8) Explore alternative means of maintaining power supply to the City, including establishment of an alternative power supply route. [This should be presented as a multi-hazard action item.]
- (9) Provide the City with emergency power generation capability adequate to support and maintain the City's critical facilities. [This should be presented as a multi-hazard action item.]

**City Of Kennewick**

Mark Yaden, Fire Marshal, Kennewick Fire Dept.; Neil Hines, Operations Mgr., Kennewick Fire Dept.; Ken Taylor, Detective, Kennewick Police Dept.; Mike Smith, Kennewick Administrative Services. Kennewick City Hall, September 18, 2003.

**Existing Agreements:**

Tri-County Fire Mutual Aid agreement between Benton & Franklin counties & Walla Walla Fire Dist. #5 covers fire and emergency rescue. Police are covered by State laws governing mutual aid and the Tri-City Mutual Aid agreement between Kennewick, Richland, and Pasco for police services. KPD is also part of the Major Crimes Task Force and the Benton County SWAT Team and responds to any emergency in Benton County.

Public Works also has water intertie agreements with Richland for emergency potable water.

Currently work is underway on a countywide interface grant to develop mitigation actions for wildfires.

The Benton-Franklin Health District is in the process of completing emergency planning for hospitals for a wide range of situations.

**Key Concerns:**

Critical facilities include hospitals; water/sewer, treatment plants; electrical grid; police and fire stations; reservoirs; City Hall; transportation corridors; roads and freeways; Vista Field airport; Zintel Canyon Dam; communications systems (TV, radio, etc.); SECOMM; BCES; ham radio tower at city reservoir; and central facilities such as The Mall and the Coliseum.

Flooding concerns include Columbia Park by Columbia River, the water treatment plant which is sometimes affected by turbidity when the Yakima River floods, and Zintel Canyon and areas downstream (though these areas are now protected by the Zintel Canyon Dam completed in 1992). Local flooding is also possible from irrigation canal breaks.

Wildfire concerns include the urban interface on the south side of town (Thompson's Hill, Inspiration Point, and slopes) and vegetation in Zintel Canyon, Blackberry Canyon (near 19<sup>th</sup> & Garfield), and the unnamed canyon that crosses US 395. Danger is high, especially along the southern fringe of town to developments of single-family residences.

Windstorms. Columbia Park along the river and southern outskirts of town along the ridges are the windiest. Blowing dust along I-82 and US 395 south of town is also a concern as it's in Kennewick's "response area." Developments within these areas subject to high winds include the boat marina at Clover Island, and trailer park along the Columbia River, as well as power lines.

Action Items:

- (1) Public education should target most vulnerable areas. May need to review codes and ordinances. Fuel mitigation – thin out the vegetation in the canyons. Possibly evaluate physical barriers (similar to snow fences) to mitigate tumbleweeds from accumulating along urban interface fence lines.
- (2) Public education about the hazard.

Linda Boomer, Port of Kennewick. Vet Office, September 17, 2003.

Existing Agreements:

None

Key Concerns:

Critical facilities include roads, Vista Field airport, rail lines, hospitals, and the electric power system.

Flooding is not a concern for Port properties, though the Columbia River docks around Clover Island can be impacted by high water.

Wildfire concerns include rural undeveloped areas, including rural houses, and areas along railroad tracks in Finley from trains that have caused sparks creating wildfires.

Windstorms will affect moorage facilities at Clover Island.

Action Items:

- (1) Design future developments to be above flood levels. Docks must be able to accommodate a range of water levels.
- (2) Benton County should enforce weed control/buffer areas similar to Kennewick.

Peter Beaudry, Public Works Director, Municipal Services Dept.; Jack Clark, Environmental Engineer, Municipal Services Dept. Kennewick City Hall, September 30, 2003.

Existing Agreements:

Agreements in place with WSDOT and Richland for use of equipment and manpower in case of emergency and they also have water intertie agreements with Richland for emergency potable water. They're looking at also establishing a water intertie agreement with Pasco in the future.

Key Concerns:

Critical facilities include water and sewer treatment plants and pipelines, Benton PUD electrical grid, bridges over the river, Zintel Canyon Dam, rail line, irrigation canals, schools, and BIPIN, the Bi-County Police Information Network (currently separate from SECOMM and BCES).



Flooding concerns are for Columbia Park and possibly Clover Island along the Columbia River. The 100-year flood on the Columbia River would probably affect the water collector wells #4 and #5 in Columbia Park. There is also some local temporary flooding after heavy rains in areas of poor drainage. Effects are to parkland, water collector wells #4 and #5, some buildings, playgrounds, restroom facilities, and the Clover Island marina.

Wildfire concerns Urban interface on the south side of town (Thompson's Hill, Inspiration Point, and slopes) and vegetation in Zintel Canyon, mostly to single-family residences.

Windstorms affect treed areas, especially Columbia Park and Kennewick Ave. with damage to residential houses, power lines, and roads. Biggest issue in windstorms is debris from trees in the roads.

Action Items:

- (1) New development should be built above the 100-yr flood elevation.
- (2) Repair and reopen Hildebrand Rd. on the south side of Thompson's Hill so that it can be used by police and fire (only), which will improve access in this urban fringe area.

**Benton County**

Terry Marden, Planning Director. September 18, 2003

Existing Agreements:

N/A

Key Concerns:

Flooding occurs on the floodplains along the Columbia and Yakima Rivers that have been identified by FEMA mapping, and property boundaries can be determined from the FIRM maps. West Richland is prone to ice jams and flooding. Some flash flooding has occurred in various drainage areas of the Horse Heaven Hills, leading to minor road damage. East Kennewick used to experience flash flooding until the Zintel Dam was built. Damage primarily to residential and/or outbuildings at low density, some scattered infrastructure (roads, etc.). Homes have sustained water damage, but none have been swept off their foundation.

Wildfire is an issue for all homes built in the county outside the heavily developed areas, primarily residential, but could also include agricultural buildings.

Windstorm concerns are for roofs and downed trees in the County. Blowing dust is a continuous problem: Rt 221 down to Paterson is frequently shut down due to dust, and the route from Tri-Cities to Umatilla has frequent traffic advisories for blowing dust.

Action Items:

- (1) Adopt the Flood Hazard Management Plan.
- (2) Develop a program to purchase development rights from floodplain landowners to prevent additional development within the floodway and/or floodplain. (The program should purchase development rights only, not the land, as the County does not want to own a bunch of land.)
- (3) Maintain building code requirements.

Tony Schouviller, Benton County Road Maintenance Manager; Bill Murphey, Benton County Road Superintendent. September 18, 2003

Existing Agreements:

There are no such agreements in place for the Roads Department, though the Road Maintenance Manager has participated in BCES mock emergency drills for response to a radiological hazard.

Key Concerns:

Flooding concerns mentioned include a K.I.D. canal break in Finley, providing barricades (and manning the barricades for a short period), and repairs to several road shoulders where washing had occurred. In 1996, they responded to the Horn Rapids Dam canal break, providing road repair. The Weber Street area of Kennewick appears to have a relatively higher frequency of canal breaks than other K.I.D. irrigation canals.

Wildfire is rarely an issue that they are involved with.

Windstorm (and windborne dust) can be a significant problem on Rt. 221, south from Prosser to Paterson. The road intersects a large agricultural area with fine sandy soils. The area farmers have planted grass strips alongside the roadway and often leave wheat stubble in the fields to hold the soil. However, windborne dust is still a problem. There are occasional and local problems with accumulations of tumbleweeds. The Roads Department installed a barbed wire fence to catch the tumbleweeds prior to their crossing the roadway.

Action Items:

None

**Non-jurisdictional**

Debra Tichnor, American Red Cross; Tana Bader Inglima and Kris Watkins, Tri-Cities VCB;  
Jean Schalasky, Kadlec Medical Center.

Existing Agreements:

American Red Cross routinely coordinates response activities with BCES and local fire departments, health departments, etc.

Kadlec Medical Center has agreements with the Hanford Site, Umatilla Chemical Depot, and adjacent jurisdictions and hospitals for medical response, decontamination, and medical assistance.

Key Concerns:

Critical facilities include the hospital, American Red Cross office, and shelter facilities (local hotels).

Flooding concerns are mainly around a catastrophic dam breach, which would have major impacts to the hospital, and physically disrupt or damage tourist activities or resources, as well as cause problems in the evacuation of elderly care facilities.

Wildfire concerns include public misperceptions about the extent of fires and damage (large wildland fire at Hanford generated intense media coverage, which in turn led to a public perception that all of the Tri-Cities area was either on fire or at risk) and can cause tourists to cancel trips to the area. Wildfires typically occur in the summer, which is often the peak tourist season.

Windstorms (typically in the spring) close I-82 and/or Rt 240 and are also problematic for transportation.

Action Items:

- (1) Upgrade full-scale evacuation plans, equipment and preparation, particularly for ambulatory patients (for catastrophic flood from breach of Grand Coulee) (Kadlec Medical Center)

Colin Hastings, Director, Government Affairs, Home Builders Association, Tri-Cities.

Existing Agreements:

N/A

Key Concerns:

Concern generally that mitigation planning for the hazards would serve as a basis for establishing “no-build” areas or other regulatory restrictions that are not fully supported by scientific and engineering analyses.

Wildfire concerns include making sure that the command and response structure is clear for adequate and timely fire suppression.

Windstorm concerns include attention to the cost/benefits of designing and building everything to withstand really high winds: it is probably not possible given the relative infrequency of such winds.

**Action Items:**

- (1) Establish public/professional education programs for mitigation.

**City Of Richland**

Nancy Aldrich, Pete Squires, City of Richland Public Works; Candace Andrews, City of Richland Public Information Mgr.; Pete Rogalsky, City of Richland Engineer; Steve Stairs, City of Richland Transportation; Jim Penor, City of Richland Solid Waste; Rick Hopkins, City of Richland Building Official; Rick Simon, City of Richland Planning Manager; Grant Baynes, City of Richland Fire Deputy Chief; Roy Carlson, City of Richland Wastewater Manager; Wayne Collup, City of Richland Energy Services Dept.; Dave Bryant, Phil Pinard, George Kuklinski, City of Richland Parks and Recreation; John Finch, City of Richland Water Operations. Interviewed in various locations as part of the City of Richland Hazard Mitigation Planning Process.

**Existing Agreements:**

The Richland Planning Division has a standing agreement with West Richland for building inspection services.

Richland Wastewater Division has informal agreements with Kennewick and West Richland for equipment loans.

The City of Richland Energy Services Dept. has agreements with BPA, Avista, and others.

Richland Fire and Rescue has several mutual aid agreements, such as with Hanford, where interagency management teams are quickly convened according to pre-set directions during events that involve multiple jurisdictions.

Richland Building Dept. has a standing inspection agreement with Kennewick and Pasco.

Richland Public Works has formal agreements with WA DOT and Benton County for equipment and resources, and informal “handshake” agreements with Kennewick and Pasco.

Richland Fire Department agreements include: State of Washington for Resource Mobilization, Tri-counties for Mutual Aid, City of Kennewick for Automatic Aid, Service agreements with Benton County Fire Districts #1 and #4, close working relationships with Richland Police, and handling dispatch for BCES (SECOMM).

BCES and the City of Richland Public Information Office work with the radio station to provide emergency information.

The Richland Solid Waste/landfill is included in the BCES planning strategy, and landfill personnel will address specific issues related to disposal of debris.

**Key Concerns:**

Richland's critical facilities include:

- Police stations
- Fire stations
- Hospital
- Water supply and treatment (including the single water intake system, water treatment plant, main water line crossing Yakima River, Badger Mountain Pump Station, and all water treatment & storage facilities)
- Wastewater treatment plant
- City Shops
- Planning Division Office
- Power system (including 115,000 volt power transmission lines, substations, 15,000 volt distribution lines to neighborhoods, feeder lines in City, City infrastructure)
- Roads and bridges (including two choke points in getting in and out of downtown Richland to the south, the causeway out of City (4-lanes each direction) at southern end of George Washington Way, the Queensgate overpass on I-182, and I-182 bridges over the Yakima and Columbia River)
- The 911/SECOMM facilities
- Radio stations

Flooding concerns include some sewer overflows from water entering into manholes and temporary sewer line construction which added volume to be treated at the WTP, severe impacts from flooding caused by breach of Grand Coulee Dam (the river intake and the plant would likely suffer significant damage), inundation of a water well or wellfield causing removal from service, erosion around poles in flood areas, damage to underground lines in flood areas, flood erosion and oil spill potential at BMID pump intake on the Yakima, damage to transformers under I-182 Yakima River bridge and along the Columbia, access problems for the Fire Department, added debris for landfill, and canal breaks.

Wildfire concerns include water storage levels and pressure and power for pumping, as well as pumping capacity, limited access to some areas, road closures, fuel buildup, added debris and dead animal removal to City landfill, and some storm drains back-up from debris.

Windstorm concerns include downed tree limbs and damage to power lines and structures, and added debris for landfill.

**Action Items:**

- (1) Rebuild floodplain pole lines by reinforcing or moving (Energy Services Dept.)

- (2) Provide natural shoreline treatment along Columbia River to reduce erosion (Richland Parks and Recreation)
- (3) Review some of the baseline assumptions used in the FEMA floodplain hazard maps (Richland Planning Division)
- (4) Address wildfires in Yakima Delta and Amon Wasteway (Richland Fire Dept.)
- (5) A south Richland line is in the trees – move out of trees or put it underground (Energy Services Dept.)
- (6) Develop tree inventory and management plan to enhance tree growth and protect against wind damage (Richland Parks and Recreation)

### **West Richland**

Roscoe Slade, Public Works Director; Heath Mellotte, City Engineer. Interviewed September 19, 2003.

#### **Existing Agreements:**

No mutual aid or agreements in place that they know of. Police department cooperates with other departments, and Fire District cooperates with other districts.

#### **Key Concerns:**

Critical facilities include the water supply system, including eight well sites, four remote reservoir sites, and booster pump station, the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), city offices, including police station and Fire Department, and cell towers on Flattop Mountain (provide access to Police radios and City maintenance personnel).

Flooding concerns include the city golf course in the floodplain is flooded almost yearly; the WWTP is in the floodplain (adjacent to the golf course), but is protected (somewhat) by a containment berm; a levee south of the Van Giesen bridge over the Yakima River that protects part of West Richland from flooding; localized flooding occurring within the Polo Club subdivision: rising groundwater is flooding homes and septic systems, and is currently affecting approximately 100 homes; and the Yakima River flooding above West Richland, though the homes subject to the flooding are in the County, not the City.

Wildfire concerns include numerous areas throughout the City where large undeveloped parcels are maintained in sagebrush and pose a potential wildfire threat. Also, most of the City is undeveloped land (large parcels to the northwest and west), with danger to residential buildings.

Windstorm concerns include damaged roofs and downed power poles, causing loss of power to the entire city. Backup power was insufficient to operate the water supply system and the WWTP.

#### **Action Items:**

- (1) Redesign and engineer the WWTP to ensure protection against future flooding, including: placing the influent line underground; installing a pumped outflow to the river with a backflow preventer; and providing backup generators for the entire system (including sewer lift stations). The City anticipates building a new

expansion plant of similar capacity adjacent to the existing facility in five years to accommodate increased growth. Ideally, protection of the existing WWTP should occur prior to or in sync with the new construction.

- (2) Conduct a site investigation/feasibility assessment to identify the source(s) and extent of the Polo Club flooding (e.g. rising groundwater), and to develop feasible solutions to the problem.
- (3) Maintain and enforce requirements for mowing brush, removing debris piles from yards, and maintaining fire lines.
- (4) Continue to monitor and enforce building codes, particularly for roof applications.

Dennis Rhodes, Director, Community Development. Interviewed September 19, 2003.

Existing Agreements:

N/A

Key Concerns:

Flooding concerns include WWTP and golf course, and localized high groundwater situation at Polo Club subdivision.

Wildfire concerns include large extents of undeveloped land at fringe of subdivisions and interspersed between subdivisions. Specific areas of concern include Candy Mountain estates, areas around Red Mountain, and areas adjacent to the Lewis and Clark Ranch.

Windstorm concerns include blowing dust causing air pollution and nuisance issues. Anywhere with bare soils can contribute to problem – e.g., agriculture or developing areas.

Action Items:

- (1) Educate community on the need to maintain groundcover and not leave soil exposed to wind.

## ***B.5 Public Information, Education and Outreach***

Public information, education and outreach became the preferred strategy for getting members of the general public involved in the Benton County Hazard Mitigation Plan planning process. However, even with this strategy becoming the most effective way to reach the public, each educational and outreach opportunity included a request for information from members of the public about their knowledge pertaining to flooding, windstorms and wildfires, as well as their feedback about the BCHMP, including potential mitigation strategies. In order to provide members of the general public with easy access to the BCHMP planning process, project contact information has been put on all public information regarding the Plan.

Beginning in May 2003, and continuing through October 2003 there have been a series of ongoing activities related to the development of Benton County's HMP. Each of these activities

has solicited the involvement of members of the public in the County's hazard mitigation planning process. Summaries of each these activities follow.

**Public Notices**, beginning with a press release on March 28, 2003, announced that Benton County was undertaking a hazard mitigation planning process and that the next step would be the "formation of a Planning Subcommittee to identify and analyze the hazards that threaten Benton County . . ." Another press release distributed to newspaper, radio and television media contacts on May 5<sup>th</sup> once again announced the County undertaking the development of a Hazard Mitigation Plan and invited members of the public to a public meeting on May 20<sup>th</sup>. Public notices about the Benton County planning process also include announcements posted on the reader board as you enter the City of Richland and announcements regarding the planning process were posted on Richland's City View cable channel 13. In fact, during the Benton County Fair a message was run several times a day inviting residents to visit Benton County Emergency Services at the fair to learn about the County's hazard mitigation planning process. Since May, at least five announcements related to the County's natural hazards mitigation planning process have been posted.

**Frequently Asked Questions** were developed early in the planning process to be able to answer questions about what a Hazard Mitigation Plan is, the purpose of an HMP, why both a Benton County and City of Richland Plan are being developed, what the difference is between a natural and a technological hazard, why it's important to develop an HMP, and where people can go to get more information. The frequently asked questions have been broadly distributed throughout the planning process, and continue to be distributed as new presentations are made about the Benton County hazard mitigation planning process.

**Benton County Emergency Services Website** has provided information about the Benton County hazard mitigation planning process. A final copy of the Executive Summary will be posted on the site upon its adoption. The site also references the City of Richland's website where a copy of the Frequently Asked Questions have been posted since May 2003, as well as notification about upcoming meetings or events where information about hazard mitigation planning will be presented and the public's input sought.

**Public Presentations** provided another venue for getting information out to citizens about the Benton County hazard mitigation planning process and for prompting the public's interest and participation in the Plan's development. Letters were prepared and sent out to service organizations throughout the County requesting the opportunity to make a presentation and solicit feedback about the BCHMP. Presentations were made to the Kennewick Kiwanis (60 members on June 17<sup>th</sup>), City of Kennewick employees (75 employees on June 18<sup>th</sup>), Richland Chamber of Commerce (July), the Atomic City Kiwanis (30 members on July 15<sup>th</sup>), the Columbia Center Rotary Club (October 2<sup>nd</sup>) and the CH2M Hill Hanford Group (October 21<sup>st</sup>).

**Newsletter.** The Villager (Vol.10, No. 2, Summer 2003), a community newspaper (newsletter) published three times a year and distributed as part of the Tri-City Herald included an article about hazard mitigation planning activities in Benton County.

**City View Cable Channel 13** proved to be a valuable resource for disseminating information about the County's hazard mitigation planning process. In addition to posting information about events related to BCHMP on the Community Calendar and broadcasting the Richland Forum on Public Safety, the City's Public Information Office developed and produced a video program entitled, "Hazard Mitigation Planning." The program aired from early August through the beginning of September 2003. It provided educational information about the natural hazard



mitigation planning process being undertaken by the City of Richland and Benton County. Feedback regarding the program has been very favorable.

**Booths at Community Events.** Additional opportunities were provided for Benton County citizens to learn about the natural hazard mitigation planning activities taking place during the summer and fall of 2003. Benton County Emergency Services' booth at the Benton County Fair hosted information about the County's hazard mitigation planning effort, as well as a series of pictures related to natural hazards. More than 10,000 people visited the booth during the Fair between the 26<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of August 2003. Information about the BCHMP was also provided at Richland's City Fair on October 4<sup>th</sup> where BCES staff experienced a steady stream of people visiting their booth and picking up handouts about the BCHMP planning process. Benton County Emergency Services had another booth at Family-A-Fair October 18-19, 2003. The information about the BCHMP was available.

**Information Available at Municipal Offices and Libraries** provide yet another opportunity for members of the public to be able to access information about the County's hazard mitigation planning process. Once the BCHMP is approved, copies of the adopted Plan will also be available at these locations. Additional opportunities will be available for citizens to provide input and feedback regarding the BCHMP during the individual approval processes being undertaken by each of the jurisdictions within the County.